



# Commandant's NOTE

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## THE EXPERT INFANTRYMAN BADGE TEST

The Expert Infantryman Badge (EIB) was established in October 1943 to recognize the soldiers who had attained the high standards desired for infantrymen in World War II and to foster *esprit de corps* in infantry units.

The soldiers who have earned the badge over the ensuing years have had to prove that they could maintain their weapons and equipment under any circumstances. They have also had to be physically strong, mentally quick, and emotionally tough, and to be experts in the increasingly critical individual skills of modern-day infantry soldiers.

Today, the EIB test is a tool that leaders can use to measure our infantry soldiers' level of competence in the selected critical individual skills that they will need to succeed in combat.

The U.S. Army Infantry School has recently revised the EIB pamphlet to standardize the EIB test. The test now consists of 18 testing stations with a total of 33 possible individual tasks. The standards for these tasks are taken from the current Soldier's Manuals and related publications.

All eligible candidates must take the EIB test with a battalion-size unit or larger. Active Army infantrymen take the test in an outside location over a period of five consecutive days. National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve infantrymen who are not on active duty status must complete the test within three consecutive weekend drills.

A soldier must meet several prerequisites before he can even take the EIB test. He must:

- Be a volunteer.
- Be recommended by his unit commander.
- Be an active member of the U.S. Army, the U.S. Army Reserve, or the Army National Guard.
- Have a primary MOS in CMF 11 or CMF 18 (excluding 18D) if an enlisted soldier.
- Be identified as a 180A if a warrant officer, and be branched Infantry or Special Operations if a commissioned officer.
- Qualify as expert with the M16A1 or M16A2 rifle in accordance with FM 23-9.

The EIB program and test are outlined in detail in U.S. Army Infantry Center Pamphlet 350-6, dated April 1989, which was distributed to major commands in May 1989. A new EIB video tape was also distributed with the pamphlet to help infantry leaders and trainers set up and administer the

test properly and to prepare their soldiers to compete more effectively and earn the badge. The tape supplements the pamphlet, demonstrates the proper procedures for conducting the test, and shows how each task is performed.

To prepare their soldiers for the test, commanders should make every effort to integrate the EIB tasks into their individual and collective training programs. They should place special emphasis on sustained physical fitness and land navigation training.

The EIB streamer is awarded to Infantry or Special Forces units that have authorized guidons, if 65 percent or more of the soldiers assigned during the EIB test period are awarded the EIB. The unit may then display the streamer for one year.

Commanders are required to notify the Infantry School three months in advance of their EIB test periods and to submit after action reports to the School within 15 days after their units have completed the test. The reports must include the number of soldiers tested by task, the number who passed each task, and the number who earned the EIB. The School will use this data to study possible future changes to the EIB program and test and to determine which tasks, if any, may need to be revised.

As time passes and the number of soldiers who hold the Combat Infantryman Badge diminishes, we need to look even more to soldiers who have earned the EIB for the high degree of individual all-round proficiency that today's Army requires. I therefore encourage all infantrymen to train to the EIB standards so that they can successfully complete the test and be recognized as Expert Infantrymen.

I also challenge commanders at all levels to improve their individual and collective training programs so they can train their soldiers toward the goal of attaining the Expert Infantryman Badge, and more important, the goal of attaining success in combat.

The overall percentage of soldiers who volunteered to take the test and attained the EIB during unit testing has increased. For example, the average passing rate in 1988 was 14.3 percent; in 1989 it is 20 percent. The EIB is a tough but attainable goal that today's infantryman should strive to achieve. When a soldier is finally awarded the EIB, he will know that he has joined the ranks of a select group of professionals—the infantrymen whose determination and combat readiness are symbolized by the coveted Expert Infantryman Badge.